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background notes

Australia

United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs

March 1989

Official Name: Commonwealth of Australia

PROFILE

Geography

Area: 7.7 million sq. km. (2.966 million sq. mi.); about the size of the continental United States. **Cities:** (1987 est.) *Capital*—Canberra (pop. 286,000). *Other cities*—Sydney (3.5 million), Melbourne (3.0 million), Brisbane (1.2 million), Perth (1.1 million). **Terrain:** Varied, but generally low lying. **Climate:** Relatively dry, ranging from temperate in the south to semitropical in the north.

People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*—Australian(s). **Population** (1988 est.): 16.5 million. **Annual growth rate:** 1.5%. **Ethnic groups:** European 93%, Asian 5%, aboriginal 1%. **Religions:** Anglican 26%, Roman Catholic 26%. **Languages:** English, aboriginal. **Education:** *Years compulsory*—to age 15 in all states except Tasmania, where it is 16. *Literacy*—100%. **Health:** *Infant mortality rate*—8.8/1,000. *Life expectancy*—males 73 yrs., females 79 yrs. **Work force** (end-1987, 7.9 million): *Agriculture*—6%. *Mining, manufacturing, and utilities*—26%. *Services*—63%. *Public administration and Defense*—5%.

Government

Type: Democratic, federal-state system recognizing British monarch as sovereign. **Constitution:** July 9, 1900. **Independence** (federation): January 1, 1901.

Branches: *Executive*—prime minister and cabinet responsible to Parliament. *Legislative*—bicameral Parliament (76-member Senate, 148-member House of Representatives). *Judicial*—independent judiciary.

Administrative subdivisions: Six states and two territories.

Political parties: Liberal, National, Australian Labor, Australian Democrats. **Suffrage:** Universal and compulsory over 18.

Central government budget (FY 1988–89): $65.1 billion.

Defense (FY 1988–89): 2.7% of GDP or 9.3% of government budget.

Flag: On a blue field, UK Union Jack in the top left corner, a large white star directly beneath symbolizing federation, and five smaller white stars on the right half representing the Southern Cross constellation.

Economy

GDP (1988): $220.96 billion. **Per capita income:** $14,458. **Inflation rate:** 7.3%.

Natural resources: Bauxite, coal, iron ore, copper, tin, silver, uranium, nickel, tungsten, mineral sands, lead, zinc, diamonds, natural gas, oil.

Agriculture (1985–86, 4% of GDP): *Products*—livestock, wheat, wool, sugar. *Arable land*—9%.

Industry (1985–86, 36% of GDP): *Types*—mining, manufacturing, and transportation.

Trade (1988): *Exports*—$30.7 billion: coal, wool, wheat, meat, iron ore and concentrates, alumina, aluminum, petroleum oils, nonmonetary gold. *Major markets*—Japan, US ($3.3 billion in CY 1987), UK, Korea, PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan, West Germany. *Imports*—$30.6 billion: transportation equipment, capital goods, industrial supplies, petroleum products. *Major suppliers*—US ($5.5 billion in CY 1987), Japan, West Germany, UK, Taiwan, New Zealand, Italy, Korea.

Official exchange rate: The Australian dollar floats freely. The November 1988 rate was approximately US$0.85 = Australian $1.

Fiscal year: July 1–June 30.

Membership in International Organizations

UN and most of its specialized and related agencies, including the UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO); Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); Asian Development Bank (ADB); Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); Australia-New Zealand-US security treaty (ANZUS); Commonwealth; Colombo Plan; International Energy Agency (IEA); the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Group; and many others.

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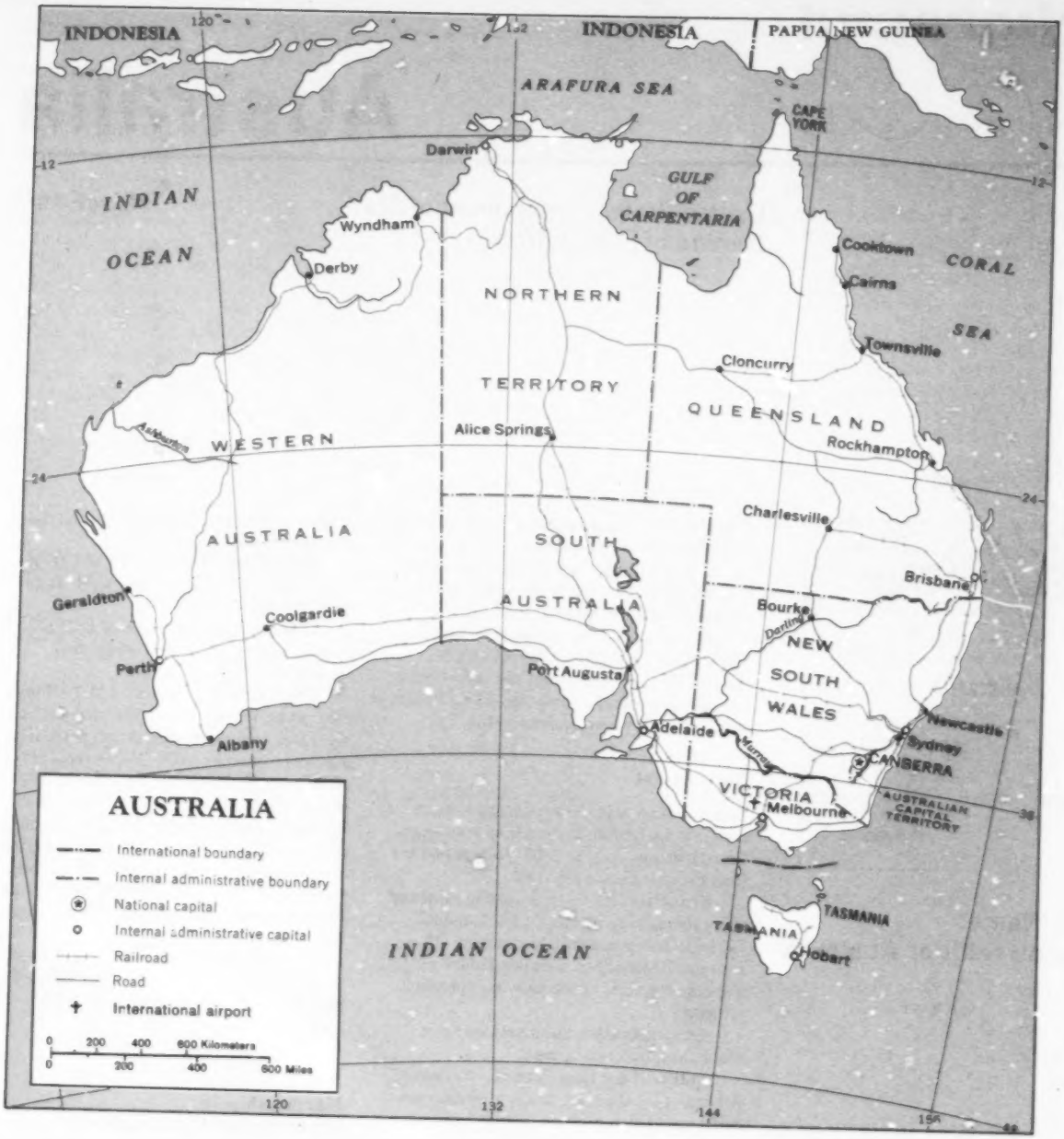
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GEOGRAPHY

Australia, the world's smallest continent but one of the largest nations, is located below the Southeast Asian archipelago and is bounded on the east by the Pacific Ocean and on the west by the Indian Ocean.

Most of the continent is a low, irregular plateau. The center is generally flat, barren, and arid. In the southeastern quarter of the country are 1.3 million square kilometers (500,000 sq. mi.) of fertile plain. Average elevation is slightly more than 274 meters (900 ft.) above sea level. The 19,300-kilometer (12,000-mi.) coastline is regular, major exceptions being the Gulf of Carpentaria on the northern coast and the Great Australian Bight on the southern coast. The Great Barrier Reef, the longest coral reef in the world, stretches 1,930 kilometers (1,200 mi.) off the east coast of Queensland.

Mountains lie roughly parallel to the east coast, in the center of the continent, and in western Australia. Chief of the eastern group are the Great Dividing Range, which runs from north to south almost the entire length of the coast, and the Australian Alps, extending for about 480 kilometers (300 mi.) through New South Wales and Victoria in the southeast. The highest point in Australia is the summit of Mt. Kosciusko, in the southeast—2,230 meters (7,314 ft.).

The coastal region is well watered by rivers, although many are short, swift, and unnavigable. The greatest of the rivers is the Murray (2,590 km.—1,609 mi.-long), which forms the major part of the boundary between New South Wales and Victoria before entering the sea in South Australia, southeast of Adelaide. Its chief tributaries are the Darling, the Murrumbidgee, and the Lachlan. Many other rivers become mere trickles in the dry season. Availability of water is the dominant factor in settlement; one-third of the continent is desert, and another third consists of marginal grazing areas.

Because of its size, Australia experiences wide variations in climate, but its insularity and lack of striking physical features make it less subject to extremes of weather than countries in corresponding latitudes. Since the country lies south of the Equator, the seasons are opposite to those of the Northern Hemisphere. Most of southern Australia has warm summers and long hours of sunshine. Nearly 40% of the country lies within the Tropics; it suffers intermittently from disastrous droughts and floods. Snow is unusual outside the mountain region.

Australia lies within the zones of prevailing westerly winds and the southeast trades, both of which affect its rainfall. On the coast, rainfall is generally plentiful, but a great part of the interior has fewer than 25 centimeters (10 in.) of rain per year. Parts of the tropical north, with an annual rainfall of 150–250 centimeters (60–100 in.), have been compared with the monsoon area of India. Other extensive areas, especially in the southeast and southwest, enjoy about 100 centimeters (39 in.) of rain annually.

PEOPLE

Australia's aboriginal inhabitants, a huntering-gatherering people, probably arrived at least 38,000 years ago. Although their tools remained primitive, their spiritual and social life was complex. When the first European settlers arrived in the late 18th century, the aboriginal population was between 250,000 and 300,000. There were as many as 500 tribes speaking many different languages. The aboriginal population currently numbers 206,000, or about 1.3% of the total population. Since the end of World War II, efforts have been made by the government and public to be more responsive to aboriginal rights and needs.

Today, tribal aboriginals lead a settled but traditional life in remote areas of northern, central, and western Australia. In the southern states, where most aborigines are of mixed descent, movement to the cities is increasing.

Immigration has been essential to Australia's development since the beginning of European settlement in 1788. For generations most settlers came from the British Isles, and the people of Australia are still predominantly of British or Irish origin, with a culture and outlook similar to those of Americans. Since World War II, the population has more than doubled, the increase reflecting, in part, an influx of newcomers through an extensive, planned immigration program. From 1945 through 1987, almost 4.5 million migrants settled in Australia, and about 80% have remained; one of every five Australians is foreign-born. Britain and Ireland have been the largest sources of postwar immigrants, followed by Italy, Greece, and Yugoslavia. Immigrants from the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America have become increasingly prominent since the late 1960s.

The 1970s saw progressive reductions in the size of the annual immigration program due to prevailing economic and employment conditions. In 1969–70, 185,000 persons were permitted to settle, but by 1985–86 the number had dropped to 84,000. The numbers are now increasing, and in the 1987–88 fiscal year Australia accepted about 132,000 regular immigrants. In addition, some 17,000 New Zealanders took up residence in Australia during the year.

Australia's refugee admissions of about 12,000 per year are in addition to the normal immigration program. Half of these refugees are from Indochina. In fact, Indochinese refugees have made up the largest single group in Australia's refugee program in recent years. Since 1975, it has accepted more than 114,000 refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia; it now has, on a per capita basis, more Indochinese refugees as permanent residents than any other country.

Although Australia has scarcely more than two persons per square kilometer, it is one of the world's most urbanized countries. Fewer than 15% of the population live in rural areas.

Cultural Achievements

Much of Australia's culture is derived from European roots, but distinctive Australian trends have evolved from the environment, aboriginal culture, and the influence of Australia's neighbors. The vigor and originality of the arts in Australia—opera, music, painting, theater, dance, and crafts—are achieving international recognition.

Australia has had a significant school of painting since the early days of European settlement, and Australians with international reputations include Sidney Nolan, Russell Drysdale, and Arthur Boyd. Writers who have achieved world recognition include Nobel Prize winner Patrick White, Thomas Keneally, Colleen McCullough, and Morris West. Australian movies have become well known during the past few years. International successes include *Breaker Morant*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *My Brilliant Career*, *Gallipoli*, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, and *The Man from Snowy River*. Australians Bruce Beresford and Peter Weir regularly direct Hollywood films.

The Captain Cook Memorial Water Jet; in the background stands the National Library, Canberra.

HISTORY

Little is known of Australia before its discovery by Dutch explorers in the 17th century. In 1770, Capt. James Cook explored the east coast and annexed it for Great Britain (Cook's crew included three American colonists). On January 26, 1788 (now celebrated as Australia Day), the First Fleet under Capt. Arthur Phillip landed at Sydney, and the Colony of New South Wales was founded. Many, but by no means all, of the first settlers were convicts, some of them condemned for offenses that today would be thought trivial. In the mid-19th century, government policies to emancipate convicts and assist immigration of free persons began. The discovery of gold in 1851 led to increased population, wealth, and trade.

The six colonies that now constitute the states of the Australian Commonwealth were created in the following order: New South Wales, 1823; Tasmania, 1825; Western Australia, 1838; South Australia, 1842; Victoria, 1851; and Queensland, 1859. Settlement had preceded these dates in most cases. Discussions between Australian representatives and the British Government led to the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act of 1900.

The first federal Parliament was opened at Melbourne in May 1901 by the Duke of York (later King George V). In May 1927, the seat of government was transferred to Canberra, a planned city designed by an American, Walter Burley Griffin, and the first session of Parliament in that city was opened by another Duke of York (later King George VI). Australia passed the Statute of Westminster Adoption Act on October 9, 1942, which officially established Australia's complete autonomy in both internal and external affairs. Its passage formalized a situation that had existed for years. The Australia Act (1986) eliminated the last vestiges of British legal authority.

GOVERNMENT

The Commonwealth government was created with a constitution patterned partly on the U.S. Constitution. The powers of the Commonwealth are specifically defined in the constitution, and the residual powers remain with the states.

Australia is a fully independent nation within the Commonwealth. Queen Elizabeth II is the sovereign and since 1973 has been officially styled "Queen of Australia." The Queen is represented throughout Australia by a governor-general and in each state by a governor.

The federal Parliament is bicameral, consisting of a Senate and a House of Representatives. Twelve senators from each state and two from each territory are elected for 6-year terms, with half elected every 3 years. The 148 members of the House of Representatives are allocated to the states and territories roughly in proportion to population. In ordinary legislation, the two chambers have coordinate powers, but all proposals for appropriating revenue or imposing taxation must be introduced in the House of Representatives. Under the prevailing Westminster parliamentary system, the leader of the political party or coalition of parties that wins a majority of the seats in the House of Representatives is named prime minister. The prime minister and the cabinet wield actual power and are responsible to the Parliament, of which they must be elected members. General

elections are held at least once every 3 years; the last general election was in July 1987.

Each of the six states is headed by a premier, who is the leader of the party that commands a majority in the lower house of the state legislature. In addition, Australia has two territories: the Australian Capital Territory (similar in status to the District of Columbia) and the Northern Territory. The latter attained self-government in 1978. Australia also is responsible for the administration of several external territories, including Christmas Island (2,610 km–1,622 mi.—northwest of Fremantle, Western Australia); the uninhabited Coral Sea Islands Territory; and the Ashmore and Cartier Islands (in the Timor Sea).

At the apex of the court system is the High Court of Australia. It has general appellate jurisdiction over all other federal and state courts and possesses the power of constitutional review.

Principal Government Officials

Governor General—William G. Hayden
Prime Minister—Robert J. L. Hawke
Deputy Prime Minister—Lionel F. Bowen
Treasurer—Paul J. Keating
Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister—Gareth Evans
Defense Minister—Kim C. Beazley

Ambassador to the United States—F. Rawdon Dalrymple
Ambassador to the United Nations—Peter Wilenski

Australia maintains an embassy in the United States at 1601 Massachusetts Ave. NW., Washington, D.C. (tel. 202–797–3000), and consulates general in New York (212–245–4000), Chicago (312–645–9440), San Francisco (415–362–6160), Honolulu (808–524–5050), Los Angeles (213–469–4300), and Houston (713–629–9131).

Travel Notes

Climate and clothing: Most of southern Australia has warm summers and mild winters (seasons are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere). Wear lightweight clothing year round except in the more temperate regions during winter; warmer clothes and an overcoat are then required.

Customs: In general, when visitors arrive in Australia they must present:

- A (gratis) visitor's visa (usually valid for multiple entries within 5 years of issue or until passport expires. Stays of 6 months per entry may be permitted); and
- A return or onward-passage ticket.

Immunizations are not usually required for travelers when arriving directly from the United States, New Zealand, or Europe. Health requirements change; before departure, check with an airline ticket office, the Australian Embassy in Washington, DC, or the nearest Australian Consulate General.

No restrictions are placed on bringing US dollars into or out of Australia. No more than 5,000 Australian dollars in Australian currency notes may be taken out. Letters of credit, travelers checks, and US currency are freely negotiable. Australia uses a decimal system of currency denominated in dollars and cents. A tourist's personal property is generally exempt from customs duty. Pets may be allowed entry but only after long and expensive periods of quarantine outside Australia.

Health: Australia has no unusual health problems or serious endemic diseases, and no special health precautions are necessary for tourists. Hospitals are modern and competently staffed and accept Blue Cross or Blue Shield insurance. Drug stores carry familiar brand-name medicines; some are open 24 hours and provide delivery service.

Telecommunications: Reliable international telephone, telegraph, telex, and postal services are available.

Transportation: International airlines serve Australia regularly. Domestic airlines, trains, and buses provide reliable and comfortable service between major cities. Rail and bus fares are reasonable, but domestic airfares are high. Car rental services are available in all cities. Public transportation and taxi service are good.

Tourist attractions: Australians are great sports enthusiasts: horseracing, cricket, tennis, and (in Victoria) Australian football attract large crowds. The Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race commences December 26; the yachting armada streaming out the majestic Heads of Sydney Harbor is a magnificent sight. Surfing carnivals are staged by Surf Life Saving Associations on summer weekends in many parts of Australia. Melbourne is famous for fine race courses and golf courses, for its Royal Botanical Garden, and for its Boston-like charm. Sites of interest include the National Museum (natural history) and the Old Melbourne Gaol and Penal Museum—a prison built in 1841, with relics from colorful chapters of Australian history. In Sydney, favorite attractions are the breathtaking harbor; the Sydney Opera House, with its striking architecture; the Rocks area, often referred to as "the cradle of Sydney"; and the Taronga Park Zoo. The Great Barrier Reef, off the coast of Queensland, is renowned for skindiving and big game fishing.

Time zones: Australia has three time zones. Because the seasons in Australia are opposite those in the Northern Hemisphere, those states in Australia that observe daylight saving time return to standard time in March, about when the US commences daylight saving. Consequently, when the US east coast is on daylight saving time, the Australian east coast is 14 hours ahead, i.e., 6 pm eastern daylight time is 8 am the next day on the Australian east coast. Similarly, when the US east coast goes off daylight saving time in October, and most localities on the Australian east coast commence it, the difference between the two becomes 16 hours—6 pm eastern standard time is 10 am the next day on the Australian east coast. Queensland and western Australia remain on standard time throughout the year.

National holidays: New Year's Day, Australia Day (Jan. 26 or the first Monday after that date), Good Friday, Easter Monday, ANZAC Day (Apr. 25), Queen's Birthday (second Monday in June), Christmas Day, Boxing Day (Dec. 26).

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The three main political groups in Australia are the Liberal Party (LP), nominally representing urban business-related groups; the National Party (NP), nominally representing rural interests; and the Australian Labor Party (ALP), nominally representing the trade unions, working classes, and liberal and leftwing groups. Although embracing some extreme leftists, the ALP overall is moderately socialist in its policies and approaches to economic and social issues. All political groups are tied by tradition to domestic welfare policies, originating at the turn of the century, which have kept Australia in the forefront of societies offering extensive social welfare programs. There is strong bipartisan sentiment on a number of issues, including Australia's commitment to the ANZUS alliance.

The ALP came to power on March 5, 1983, ending more than 7 years of rule by the Liberal/National coalition led by Malcolm Fraser. Bob Hawke, leader of the ALP and former head of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, became prime minister. The ALP, as of mid-1988, held 85 seats in the House of Representatives against 45 for the Liberal Party and 18 for the National Party. The ALP also controlled three state governments: Vic-

toria, South Australia, and Western Australia. The Liberal Party controlled New South Wales and Tasmania, while the National Party governed in Queensland. As in the United States, state and federal elections are separate, and control of state parliaments does not necessarily translate into federal parliamentary seats.

In the Senate, the ALP held 32 of the 76 seats, the Liberal Party 27, the National Party 7, the Australian Democrats—a small party originally linked to the Liberal Party—7, and there were three independents. Thus, the ALP lacked a majority in the Senate. This could be important because budgetary legislation, while originating in the House, must be approved by the Senate. Repeated refusal by the Liberal/National opposition in the Senate to approve the budget in 1975 led to dissolution of the then-Labor government by the Governor-General. Although such a controversial event is not again anticipated, the possibility for a deadlocked Senate exists.

ECONOMY

Throughout its modern history, the Australian economy has consisted of a diversified manufacturing/service sector dedicated to domestic requirements coupled with export-oriented agricultural and mining sectors. In 1987, more than 72% of all Australian exports were primary agricultural or mineral products. Thus, the Australian economy and balance of payments can be significantly influenced by world movements in these markets.

Australia has immense mineral and energy resources. It is one of the world's leading producers and exporters of aluminum, alumina, bauxite, cobalt, copper, industrial diamonds, gold, iron ore, lead, nickel, silver, and uranium. In addition, abundant supplies of coal, natural gas, liquid petroleum gas, and uranium make Australia a net exporter of energy products.

The manufacturing sector is limited by Australia's small domestic market and relatively high labor costs arising from a strong union movement. However, Australia has developed a broad-based manufacturing sector largely due to an extensive and effective range of tariffs and other protective measures. Trade barriers long have insulated domestic industry from foreign competition.

The traditional ways of doing business in Australia are undergoing radical change. Prime Minister Hawke's Labor government has undertaken a program to liberalize the economy and introduce greater industrial competitiveness and openness to the international market. By floating the Australian dollar and allowing it to fall dramatically from 1984 to 1987, the government rendered the manufacturing sector more competitive with imports and more capable of exporting overseas. Corporate taxes were significantly reduced, and the unions agreed to falling real wage rates. With industry thus strengthened, protective barriers are being dismantled. In 1988, the government embarked on a phased program to reduce tariffs significantly by 1995, although tariffs on automobiles and textiles would still remain above 15%. The financial sector also has been liberalized and exposed to international competition.

With the government's macroeconomic policy now largely in place, management and labor are busy adapting to the new business conditions. The focus of the government has shifted somewhat to microeconomic reform. For the first time, a system of national wage awards linking wage gains to productivity increases has been introduced.

The government maintained a tight rein on the economy in 1988, and prospects for Australia's economic future are generally bright. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth is among the highest in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Real annualized GDP grew at the rate of 3.4% in FY 1988. The inflation rate in FY 1988 was 7.3%, and the average unemployment rate was 7.8%.

For FY 1988, the government produced the first budget surplus in 35 years. However, gross external debt, at $87 billion, is high for a country of 16.5 million people. Inflation and average weekly earnings growth rates remain above the OECD average, and the current account deficit, although diminishing, remains imposing.

Foreign investment has been vital to the development of Australian ranching, transport, and manufacturing. The Australian Government welcomes foreign investment that is consistent with the needs of the Australian community, expands private investment, develops export-oriented industries, and creates employment opportunities. The government generally seeks to facilitate foreign investment within certain guidelines. Some restrictions on foreign ownership are in force in banking, the media, civil aviation, mining, and real estate. In 1987, cumulative U.S. investment in Australia amounted to $11 billion.

FOREIGN RELATIONS AND DEFENSE

Australia has been active in international affairs since World War II. Its first major independent foreign policy action was to conclude an agreement in 1944 with New Zealand dealing with the security, welfare, and advancement of the people of the independent territories of the Pacific (the ANZAC pact). After the war, Australia played a role in the Far Eastern Commission in Japan and supported Indonesian independence during that country's revolt against the Dutch (1945–49). Australia was one of the founders of the South Pacific Commission (1947), and in 1950 it proposed the Colombo Plan to assist developing countries in Asia. In addition to contributing to UN forces in Korea (it was the first country to announce it would do so after the United States), Australia sent troops to assist in suppressing the communist revolt in Malaya in 1948–60, and later to combat the Indonesian-supported invasion of Sarawak in 1963–65. Australia also sent troops to assist South Vietnamese and U.S. forces in Vietnam. Australia was a member of the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and later of the Australia-New Zealand-U.K. agreement and the Five Power Defense Arrangement, successive arrangements with Britain and New Zealand to assist in the defense of Singapore and Malaysia.

A participant in the drafting of the UN Charter, Australia has given firm support to the United Nations and its specialized agencies. It was a member of the Security Council for 1986–87, a member of the Economic and Social Council for 1986–89, and a member of the UN Development Program Governing Council for 1984–86. Australia takes a prominent part in many other UN activities, including peacekeeping, disarmament, human rights, and narcotics control. Australia also is active in meetings of the Commonwealth Regional Heads of Government and the South Pacific Forum.

Australia has devoted particular attention to relations between developed and developing nations, with emphasis on the countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations—Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the

Philippines, and Brunei—and the island states of the South Pacific. Australia has a large bilateral aid program (about U.S. $875 million for 1988–89, mostly in the form of grants) under which some 80 countries receive assistance. Papua New Guinea, Australia's former colony, is the largest recipient of Australian assistance.

ANZUS

The ANZUS security treaty was signed by representatives of Australia, New Zealand, and the United States at San Francisco on September 1, 1951, and entered into force on April 29, 1952. The treaty binds the signatories to recognize that an armed attack in the Pacific area on any of them would endanger the peace and safety of the others. It commits them to consult in the event of threat and, in the event of attack, to meet the common danger in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. Furthermore, an attack on the territories or forces of any of the parties in the Pacific area is deemed to be an armed attack as described in the treaty. Finally, it pledges Australia, New Zealand, and the United States to maintain and develop individual and collective capabilities to resist attack.

In early 1985, the nature of the ANZUS alliance changed after the Government of New Zealand refused access to its ports by nuclear-capable and nuclear-powered ships of the U.S. Navy. The United States suspended most forms of defense cooperation with New Zealand, and a series of annual bilateral meetings between the U.S. Secretary of State and the Australian Foreign Minister replaced annual meetings of the ANZUS Council of Foreign Ministers. The first bilateral meeting, in 1985, was held in Canberra. At the second, in San Francisco in 1986, the United States announced that it was suspending treaty security obligations to New Zealand pending the restoration of port access. Subsequent U.S.-Australia bilateral meetings took place in Sydney (1987) and Washington (1988).

The Australia-U.S. alliance under the ANZUS treaty remains in full force. Defense ministers of one or both nations often have joined the annual ministerial meetings, which are supplemented by consultations between the U.S. Commander in Chief Pacific and the Australian Chief of Defence Force. There also are regular civilian and military consultations between the two governments at lower levels on topics of mutual interest.

Bogong Village on the Junction Dam of the Kiewa hydroelectric scheme in the Australian Alps. Photo by W. Pederson, Australian News & Information Bureau.

Unlike NATO, ANZUS has no integrated defense structure or dedicated forces. However, in fulfillment of ANZUS obligations, Australia and the United States conduct a variety of joint activities. These include military exercises ranging from naval and landing exercises at the task-group level to battalion-level special forces training, assigning officers to each other's armed services, and standardizing where possible equipment and operational doctrine. The two countries also operate five joint defense facilities in Australia.

The Australian Defence Force numbers about 71,000 men and women on active duty: 32,000 in the army, 16,000 in the navy, and 23,000 in the air force. Supplementing the regular forces are some 27,000 members of the army, navy, and air force reserves. The Royal Australian Navy's front-line fleet comprises three guided-missile destroyers, four guided-missile frigates, six destroyer escorts, and six Oberon-class submarines. The F/A–18 fighter, built in Australia under license from the U.S. manufacturer, is coming into service as the principal combat aircraft of the Royal Australian Air Force.

U.S.-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS

The World War II experience, similarities in culture and historical background, and shared democratic values have made U.S. relations with Australia exceptionally close and friendly. Ties linking the two nations cover the entire spectrum of international relations, from commercial and cultural contacts to political and defense cooperation. Traditional friendship is reinforced by a wide range of common interests and similar views on most major international questions. For example, both countries called for the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan; both also attach high priority to controlling and eventually eliminating chemical weapons. The

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For information on foreign economic trends, commercial development, production, trade regulations, and tariff rates, contact the International Trade Administration, US Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230; this information also is available from Commerce Department district offices.

Australian Government and opposition share the view that Australia's security depends on firm ties with the United States, and the ANZUS Treaty enjoys bipartisan support.

Frictions sometimes arise in trade relations. In recent years, the Australians have protested what they consider U.S. protectionist barriers against their exports of wool, meat, dairy products, lead, zinc, and uranium. At various times, Australia has expressed concern about the spill-over effect on world trade of U.S. inflation, government deficits, and agricultural policies.

Multilaterally, Australia and the United States work together very closely in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade for the elimination of subsidies and import barriers from world agricultural markets.

A number of U.S. institutions conduct scientific activities in Australia because of its geographical position, large land mass, advanced technology, and, above all, the ready cooperation of its government and scientists. A significant amount of U.S.-Australian scientific activity occurs within the framework of the 1968 scientific and technical cooperation agreement between the two countries. Under a separate agreement concluded in the same year, and since renewed, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration maintains in Australia its largest and most important program outside the United States, including a number of tracking facilities vital to the U.S. space program.

Principal U.S. Officials

Ambassador—Laurence William Lane, Jr.
Deputy Chief of Mission—Richard W. Teare
Economic Counselor—Tain P. Tompkins
Political Counselor—John E. Kelley
Public Affairs—Lewis R. Luchs
Defense and Air Attache and Representative of the Commander in Chief Pacific—Col. Dean Stickell, USAF
Agricultural Counselor—James V. Parker
Senior Commercial Officer—Robert A. Taft (resident in Sydney)

The U.S. Embassy in Australia is located at Moonah Place, Yarralumla, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory 2600 (tel. 62–70–5000). Consulates General are in Sydney (2–261–9200), Melbourne (3–697–7900), and Perth (9–221–1177). There is a Consulate in Brisbane (7–839–8955). ■

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